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## The Telephone in Pocahontas County

The coming of the telephone to Pocahontas county was the first quick communication that we had with the busy marts of trade. It antedated the telegraph. The county was connected up with the centers by telephone in the year 1898, and that marks the beginning of quick news. I cannot say that it brought any special relief but the citizens of this county are like every one else, interested in all advancement of science and education. Inside the county, the telephone has been a convenience and a time saver from the time that it was first installed. In the year of 1899 telephone lines were built along all of the principal roads in the county. Now instead of riding to Mdray, Huntersville and elsewhere for a doctor which often took many hours of hard riding in the bitter cold weather, he could now be reached in a few minutes by telephone. It has saved many a journey and many a messenger.

In 1898, the telephone had reached the town of Huttonsville, which town also had a railroad and was one of the depots for Marlinton. Marlinton occupied, that year, a peculiar situation in regard to railroad facilities, north it was 46 miles to Huttonsville; south 46 miles to Conceverte; East 46 miles to Millboro; west about 46 miles (no road) to Camden on the Gauley.

In that year, a company of Randolph County men formed the Marlinton and Beverly Telephone Company, and they decided to build a telephone line into Pocahontas county. They paralleled the Huttonsville and Marlinton turnpike, from Huttonsville here with chestnut poles big enough to build a hay stack around.



On these was strung a small wire and the line came forward in a very short time. It seemed to take no time at all to connect the two villages, and no time at all to connect our shut in village with the wires that ran all over the world.

A telephone was set up in Squire Uriah Bird's Store and Justice Court room and I got the greatest thrill of my life by holding a conversation with the late Dr. Bosworth, who was in Suttonsville, forty-six miles away. I have believed in faries ever since. It was a question submitted to the local wise men how a voice could be heard that far, and the most plausible theory was by one of the neighbors in debating how sound could travel through the air instantly. We had all watched a man cutting wood at a distance and noticed that the sound reached us a long time after we saw the ax descend. The theory was that the electric field was like a plank, that when it was pushed forward that both ends moved simultaneously. This seemed to satisfy all of the neighbors who had gathered, 100%, to hear this first message to be heard over the new line.

It will be seen by the date that telephones were in more or less general use long before they reached this county, and like so many of our developments, was done by people outside the county instead of by the local people.

When we got the telephone we made much of it in the papers it caused the Highland county paper to guy us for being so far behind the times.

We have got so mechanical now that we have to go to the woods and sleep in the rain to enjoy the pence we once knew.

From--Focahontas Times, January 2, 1930



The next telephone company to build and operate a line in this county was the Moncevert and Elkins Telephone Co. whose charter found in Deed Book 35 page 15 gives the following information:

Certificate Of Incorporation

September 1, 1903

Principal place of business to be at Marlinton.

its chief works shall be located in Pocahontas county and other counties.

The capital stock shall be \$10,000 to be divided into 100 shares at a par value of \$100 each.

Stockholders-----	Address-----	Number of shares
S. J. Payne	----- Academy, W. Va.--	five
E. M. Arbogast	-----Marlinton, W. Va.---	five
G. S. Mohn	-----Pennsylvania -----	five
W. A. Bratton	----- Marlinton, W. Va.----	four
J. W. Price	----- Marlinton, W. Va.----	One

Rates were high and many of the people did not feel that they could pay them, therefore the business men of the county got together and organized the mutual telephone companies that later built lines to all sections of the county.